

(M.R.T.S.) as a long term strategy to cope up with the rapidly increasing volume of traffic in Delhi.

(c) to (f) Yes, Sir. However, the Committee was set up only in February, 1997 and it is too early to evaluate its impact on overall traffic management.

Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve

2209. SHRI T. GOPAL KRISHNA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the villagers living within the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve are agitating for opening its core zone to them;

(b) if so, the date from which the villagers access to the Biosphere Reserve has been stopped;

(c) whether poachers and hunters now operate without check in the reserve area;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to protect the Biosphere?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) The State Government of Uttar Pradesh has reported that from time to time they have received letters and representations from the local people to open the core zone area for tourism and trekking.

(b) Any entry into the core zone of the Biosphere Reserve has been prohibited since 18.2.1983.

(c) No Sir. The State Government has reported that regular patrolling of area is done by the staff employed for the purpose who keep a strict watch and control on any poaching and hunting.

(d) and (e) Does not arise. However, eco-development activities in the buffer zone are undertaken with the cooperation and involvement of the local people.

Production of Fruit and Vegetable in Gujarat

2210. SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of Gujarat in the production of fruit and vegetable as compared to other States in the country ;

(b) the type of assistance provided to Gujarat by the Indian council for Agricultural Research for research work in the field of fruit and vegetable;

(c) the details of the amount sanctioned by the Government for this purpose during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 and the actual amount spent thereon;

(d) the details of the assistance provided to Gujarat by the Government in the production processing and marketing of fruit and vegetable; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to promote and the development of fruit and vegetable in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) Gujarat occupies 7th position in the production of fruits and 12th position in the production of vegetables in the country.

(b) and (c) The Indian Council of Agricultural research is providing assistance through All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on fruits and vegetables and research Centres of Indian Institute of Horticultural Research. Besides, Assistance is also being provided through *ad hoc* cess fund schemes on various crops to State Agricultural University. The details of the amount sanctioned year-wise in this regard are given in the attached Statements-I and II.

(d) and (e) In order to promote cultivation of fruits and vegetables in the country (including Gujarat) Govt. of India is implementing following schemes (besides State plan schemes) under which assistance planting materials, input supply for improving productivity, demonstration, training etc.

(i) Integrated development of fruits.

(ii) Production and supply of vegetable seeds.

(iii) Development of root and tuber crops.

(iv) Development of mushroom.

(v) Use of plastic in agriculture

(vi) Establishment of nutritional garden in rural areas

(vii) Development of bee keeping for improving crop productivity.

Govt. of India through National Horticulture Board is extending soft loan assistance for creation of infrastructure for post harvest handling and marketing facilities for fruits and vegetables. National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) is also providing assistance to cooperatives of fruits and vegetables producers for the development of infrastructure for marketing and processing in the form of loan. Ministry of Food Processing Industries on the other hand, is providing assistance for establishing processing units. Besides, Agricultural and Processed Food Export Development Authority is providing assistance through various schemes for export promotion including infrastructure development and air freight subsidy. Assistance in these cases are provided on case to case basis on demand.